

AP Literature Summer Reading Requirements:

Welcome! AP English Lit is designed to be a college-level course, preparing you for both the AP test as well as for the rigors of college classes. To maximize our time, we will begin with summer reading. The class wiki will also include this entire handout and a discussion board for posting comments about the book throughout the summer. Be prepared to turn in your assignments and discuss these works in the first weeks of school. No exceptions. An optional summer meeting with the other classes will be July 16th from 6pm-7pm and August 13th from 6pm-7pm. Bonus points will be given for those who attend.

Class wiki: <http://oshaneaplit.wikispaces.com/>



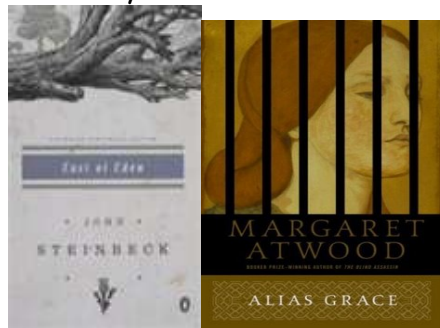
Summer Reading: Please note that both of these books are lengthy, so begin soon. Don't wait until the last week of summer!

You will read the two books below and complete 1-2 page double-spaced typed essay for each. The essays are due August 30th.

Novels:

Alias Grace by Margaret Atwood

East of Eden by John Steinbeck



Reading a Work and Responding To It Actively

Sometimes readers confuse a cursory reading with an active reading. A quick reading of a work is little more than that: for example, you might read an entire story and not be able to say anything about it at all. A more careful, active reading, however, enables you to understand and respond to questions about meaning and organization.

Obviously, we must first follow the work and understand its details. At the same time we must respond to the words, get at the ideas, understand the implications of what is happening, and apply our own experiences to verify the accuracy and truth of the situation and incidents, to appreciate the characters and their solutions to the problems they face, and to articulate our own emotional responses. In short, as active, participating readers, we should assimilate the work into our minds and spirits. (*Literature: An Introduction to Reading and Writing, Second Edition*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1989.)

With this in mind, I highly recommend you purchase the books, so that you can actively annotate the book. Please be aware and make note of the below as you read the books.

Tone/Shifts – the writer’s attitude toward the topic; *identify the writer’s tone and any shifts in tone that occur*; words that describe an author’s tone might include *critical, angry, sympathetic, caustic, sarcastic, satirical, etc.*

Style – anything a writer does which distinguishes him or her from other writers; *identify elements of the writer’s style of writing, what makes him or her unique*

Theme – the main idea or message of a literary work; *state a theme for the work using a complete, general statement*

Setting – the time and place of the story’s action; *identify the place and time of the action, note any shifts in setting as well*

Writer’s Intention – what the writer intended to convey to the reader; *identify the writer’s purpose*

Conflict(s) – a struggle between two opposing forces; *identify ALL conflicts including internal (man vs. himself) and external (man vs. man, man vs. society, man vs. nature)*

Point of View/Shifts – the vantage point from which the story is told; *identify the point of view of the work, first person, third person, and any shifts in point of view*

Mood/Shifts – the feeling or atmosphere that the work gives off; *identify the atmosphere or mood of the work, including any shifts in mood*

Characterization Methods – the method a writer uses to familiarize the reader with the characters in a work; *identify the methods of characterization the writer uses, including behavior, speech, physical description, thoughts and feelings, thoughts and feelings of other characters toward the main character*
(These 3 terms DO NOT require definitions.)

Personal Connections – *identify how the reading relates to your prior experience*

Personal Response – *identify your reactions to the reading AS YOU READ*

Title’s Significance – *identify how the title relates to the work...consider foreshadowing if applicable*

For each of the above items except *personal responses, connections, and title’s significance*, you must do the following:

Essays: These essay questions come directly from past AP tests. Choose one question for *East of Eden* and one question for *Alias Grace*.

- 1.. In retrospect, the reader often discovers that the first chapter of a novel or the opening scene of a drama introduces some of the major themes of the work. Write an essay about

the opening scene of a drama or the first chapter of a novel in which you explain how it functions in this way.

2. The conflict created when the will of an individual opposes the will of the majority is the recurring theme of many novels, plays, and essays. Select the work of an essayist who is in opposition to his or her society; or from a work of recognized literary merit, select a fictional character who is in opposition to his or her society. In a critical essay, analyze the conflict and discuss the moral and ethical implications for both the individual and the society. Do not summarize the plot or action of the work you choose.
3. Choose a complex and important character in a novel or a play of recognized literary merit who might on the basis of the character's actions alone be considered evil or immoral. In a well-organized essay, explain both how and why the full presentation of the character in the work makes us react more sympathetically than we otherwise might. Avoid plot summary.
4. The meaning of some literary works is often enhanced by sustained allusion to myths, the Bible, or other works of literature. Select a literary work that makes use of such a sustained reference. Then write a well-organized essay in which you explain the allusion that predominates in the work and analyze how it enhances the work's meaning.
5. Choose a distinguished novel or play in which some of the most significant events are mental or psychological; for example, awakenings, discoveries, changes in consciousness. In a well-organized essay, describe how the author manages to give these internal events the sense of excitement, suspense, and climax usually associated with external action. Do not merely summarize the plot.
6. One of the strongest human drives seems to be a desire for power. Write an essay in which you discuss how a character in a novel or a drama struggles to free himself or herself from the power of others or seeks to gain power over others. Be sure to demonstrate in your essay how the author uses this power struggle to enhance the meaning of the work.
7. Many writers use a country setting to establish values within a work of literature. For example, the country may be a place of virtue and peace or one of primitivism and ignorance. Choose a novel or play in which such a setting plays a significant role. Then write an essay in which you analyze how the country setting functions in the work as a whole.

Scoring Guide for Essays in A.P. English Literature

The following scoring guide is used to evaluate student essays. While the guide does not fit every essay, it does establish the basic standards for scores. In general, teachers reward each essay for

what it does well. Thus, the more substance and analysis a paper contains, the higher it will be scored. Papers with many distracting errors in writing should be scored no higher than 3.

8-9 papers respond to the assignment clearly, directly and fully. These papers approach the text analytically and illustrate their points with numerous textual references and/or quotations. They show subtlety in their use of the text, and their own style indicates flexibility and mastery. They need not, however, be free from errors.

6-7 papers respond to the assignment clearly and directly but with less development than 8-9 papers. They indicate a good understanding of the text and support their points with appropriate textual references and, or quotations. While their approach is analytic, the analysis is less precise than in 8-9 papers, and use of the text is competent but not subtle. The writing is forceful and clear, but need not be free from errors.

5 papers typically address the assigned question intelligently but do not answer it fully and specifically. They are characterized by a good but general grasp of the text and by the ability to use the text to frame an apt but imprecise response to the assignment. They may use textual references and quotations sparingly or without clearly enough supporting their points. The style of 5 essays is characterized by adequate clarity and organizational divisions, but may be mechanical or banal.

3-4 papers fail in some important way to fulfill the assignment. They may omit some part of the question, fail to provide minimal textual support for their points, or base their analysis on a misreading of some part of the text. Nevertheless, these essays normally present one or more incisive points among others of less value. The writing may be similarly uneven in development, with lapses in organization or clarity.

1-2 papers commonly combine two or more serious failures: they may not address the actual question; they may indicate serious misreading of the text; they may not use textual support- or may use it in a way that suggests failure to understand the text; they may be unclear, badly written or unacceptably brief. The style of these papers is usually marked by egregious errors or by abruptness that suggests the student did not finish; but some may be smoothly written, though devoid of content.

The best papers answer the question directly, often in the first sentence. Papers without examples and/or quotations are almost always lower half.

ANY FORM OF PLAGARISM WILL RESULT IN A ZERO

Summer Reading Contract

I have received and read the requirements for the summer reading and will do the stated summer course work and be prepared for exams/ assignments the first week of school.

Name: _____

Entering Grade_____

Circle One:

AP English 11 AP English 12

Student's Signature: _____

Date:_____